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SUBJECT Schorr's Commentary on Inman

SANFORD UNGAR: Admiral Bobby Inman, the former Director of the National Security Agency announced yesterday that he is retiring as Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Inman, who is 51-years old says he wants to work in the private sector, so he will also retire from the Navy.

Inman was regarded by many people in the Reagan Administration to be too moderate but commentator Daniel Schorr says there may be other reasons for the Admiral's decision.

DANIEL SCHORR: His objections to CIA spying at home into hastily conceived covert operations abroad may have made Admiral Inman seem too liberal for a right-wing Administration. But more to the point was his defense of professionalism against the harnessing of intelligence to ideological purposes.

Inman opposed a Reagan executive order easing restraints on domestic surveillance and breaks less from scruples about civil liberties than a conviction that an intelligence agency functions better under professional discipline.

More recently he was fighting a National Security Council plan to elevate counterintelligence into a separate, centralized agency.

Inman was appalled to find that an avowedly security conscious Administration had no compunction about leaking sensitive intelligence information for political and ideological reasons.

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In trying to keep leaks from compromising intelligence sources, Inman may have put his own credibility into question.

He helped to spread word that reports of Libyan hit men gunning for President Reagan had come, not from American intelligence but from a foreign embassy.

He tried to discredit basically accurate reports of plans for a guerrilla force in Honduras to operate against Nicaragua.

He tried to squelch an accurate report that American intelligence was aiding Britain in the Falkland Island dispute.

Inman had quietly run a bigger and more secret agency than the CIA, the National Security Agency and it was depressing to be number two to William Casey, who became the subject of a highly publicized investigation, as did his crony, the Chief of Clandestine Operations, Max Hugel. Hugel was forced out and Casey was look-warmedly judged not unfit to serve by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Congressional sources quote Inman as saying about his own resignation, I have never enjoyed being number two.

Indeed, he was, and remains the candidate of the committee's chairman, Senator Barry Goldwater, to be number one.

Goldwater, retired reserve Air Force general shares with the retiring Navy admiral a conviction that intelligence should be run by a professional.

That raises the question of whether Inman's resignation which the White House delayed almost a month in announcing, was prompted exclusively by a wish to make money in private life, or whether Inman, the subtle intelligence professional is deliberately raising a storm on Capitol Hill that may eventually help to bring Inman back as number one.